

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method for ranking creators of a set of documents in order of their expertise in a subject including the steps of:

from the set of documents, selecting documents ~~from the set of documents~~ that refer to the subject, to create a subject related subset of documents;

selecting extracts from the subset of documents that refer to the subject;

analyzing the linguistic structure of the extracts by isolating verbs in the extracts to create a set of verbs for classification;

classifying each isolated verb in the set of verbs according to a predetermined hierarchy; and

using the analysis to rank the creators.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method for ranking creators of a set of documents according to claim 1 including the further step of:

creating the predetermined hierarchy by mapping isolated verbs to an illocutionary verb in a predefined set of illocutionary verbs and;

classifying the mapped isolated verbs according to the Speech Act Theory category of the corresponding illocutionary verb.

Claim 3. (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method for ranking creators of a set of documents according to claim 2 including the further step of:

filtering isolated verbs not having a predefined illocutionary verb and thus not successfully mapped to the set of illocutionary verbs and;

checking for synonyms of the unmapped isolated verbs, that have a predefined illocutionary verb and;

classifying the unmapped isolated verbs according to the Speech Act Theory of the corresponding illocutionary verb of it synonym.

Claim [[5.]] 4. (Currently Amended) A method for ranking creators according to claim 1, wherein isolating verbs includes the step of:

decomposing sentences in the extracts into a group of grammatically-related phrases ,~~such as~~ comprising at least one of "noun", "adverb", "adjective", "verb" [[or]] and "preposition".

Claim 5. (Previously Presented) A method for ranking creators of a set of documents according to claim 1, including the step of:

weighting extracts to favor those written in the first person over those written in the third person.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented) A method for ranking creators according to claim 1, wherein the set of documents is e-mail communications.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium encoded with a program executable to rank creators of a set of documents in order of their expertise in a subject by performing steps which implement ~~according to~~ the method of claim 1.

Claim 8. (Previously Presented) A computer programmed to rank creators of a set of documents in order of their expertise in a subject according to the method of claim 1.

Claim 9. (Previously Presented) A computer to rank creators of a set of documents in order of their expertise including means for:

selecting documents from the set of documents that refer to the subject to create a subject related subset of documents;

selecting extracts from the subset of documents that refer to the subject;

analyzing the linguistic structure of the extracts by isolating verbs in the extracts to create a set of verbs for classification, and classifying each

isolated verb in the set of verbs according to a predetermined hierarchy and using the analysis to rank the creators.